



The Language of Redistricting

Key Concepts & Terminology



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The Language of Redistricting

Apportionment

The process of assigning seats in a legislative body among established districts.

Following each census, the 435 seats in the United States House of Representatives are apportioned to each state based on state population. The larger the state population, the more congressional representatives the state will be apportioned.

Redistricting

Redistricting refers to the process by which census data is used to redraw the lines and boundaries of electoral districts within a state to ensure that districts are substantially equal in population.

This process affects districts at all levels of government – from local school boards and city councils to state legislatures and the U.S. House of Representatives.

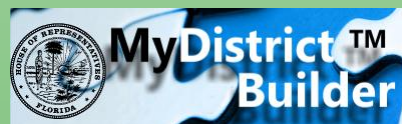
WHAT IS REDISTRICTING?

The drawing of new political boundaries.

WHAT IS MYDISTRICTBUILDER?

The online application that Floridians and their Legislators will use to propose new districts.

For the latest news on MyDistrictBuilder, visit floridaredistricting.org.



Redistricting Geography

Key terms to know when building with MyDistrictBuilder

Census Block

The smallest level of census geography used by the Census Bureau to collect census data. Census blocks are formed by streets, roads, bodies of water, other physical features and legal boundaries shown on Census Bureau maps.

Census Block Group

A Block Group is a cluster of census blocks within a census tract.

Census Tract

Census Tracts are small, relatively permanent statistical subdivisions of a county delineated by local participants as part of the U.S. Census Bureau's Participant Statistical Areas Program. Census tracts generally have between 1,500 and 8,000 people, with an optimum size of 4,000 people.

County

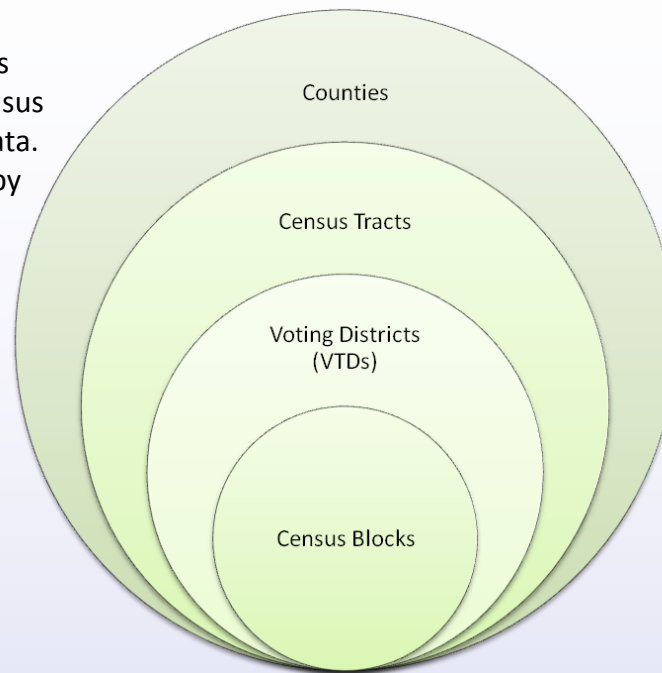
The primary legal divisions of most states are termed counties. County subdivisions are the primary divisions of counties for the reporting of decennial census data.

District

The geographical boundaries that define the constituency of an elected official.

Parcels

Parcels are a plot of land, often times where a home or business is located. The FL Department of Revenue's statewide parcel files are utilized in MyDistrictBuilder.



Places (Cities)

Generally, Places refer to Cities. Places, for the reporting of decennial census data, include consolidated cities, Census Designated Places (CDP), and incorporated places.

Precinct

An area created by election officials to group voters for assignment to a designated polling place so that an election can be conducted. Precinct boundaries may change several times over the course of a decade.

Voting Districts (VTD)

VTDs are the generic name for geographic entities, such as precincts, wards, and election districts, established by state, local, and tribal governments for the purpose of conducting elections.



2010 CENSUS

Decennial Census

As required by the U.S. Constitution, every 10 years, the government reports the number of people who live in the U.S. by conducting a count called the census.

Who is counted?

Everyone! All children and adults, regardless of nationality, citizenship status, race, age, or gender.

American Community Survey

Annual social, economic, housing, and demographic data collected by the U.S. Census Bureau. The data allows tracking trends and changes in communities.

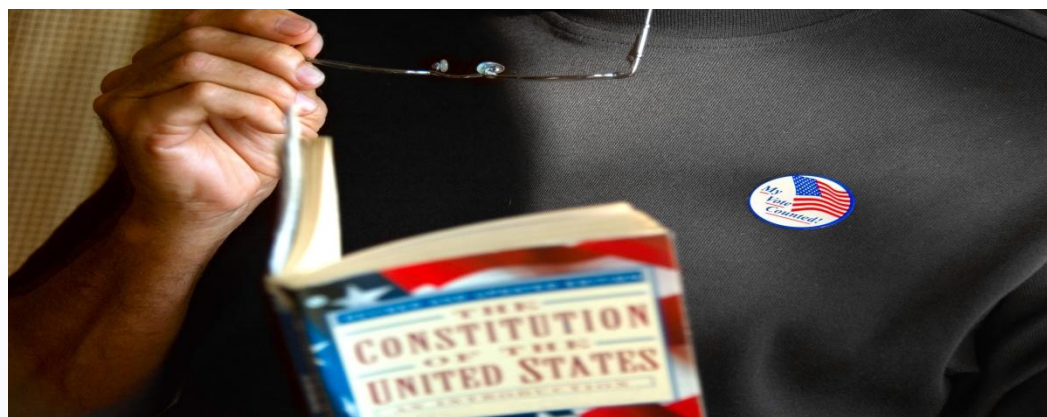
Public Law (PL) 94-171

The federal law that requires the U.S. Census Bureau to provide states with data for use in redistricting.

Resident Population

The U.S. resident population includes everyone living and staying in the United States at the time of the census. The resident population is used for redistricting.





Traditional Redistricting Concepts

Contiguous (Contiguity)

A geographically contiguous district is one in which all parts of the district are attached to each other.

Deviation

Any amount of population that is less than or greater than the ideal population of a district.

Gerrymandering

The drawing of electoral districts to give one group or party an advantage over another. Generally, gerrymandering is discussed in terms of either “partisan gerrymandering” or “racial gerrymandering.”

Ideal Population (Equal Population)

The total state population divided by the number of seats in a legislative body.

For example, if a state’s population is 1,000,000 and there are 100 electoral districts, the ideal population for each district is 10,000.

Overall Range

The difference in population between the largest and smallest districts in a redistricting plans.

Preclearance

Preclearance refers to the process of seeking review and approval from either the United States Department

of Justice (DOJ) or the federal court in the District of Columbia for any voting or redistricting changes to a Section 5 covered jurisdiction.

Traditional Redistricting Principles

General policies or goals that have been most frequently recognized by the courts:

- Compactness;
- Contiguity;
- Preservation of counties and other political subdivisions;
- Preservation of communities of interest;
- Preservation of cores of prior districts; and
- Compliance with Section 2 of the Voting Rights Act.

VAP (Voting Age Population)

The number of people over 18 years of age.

SECTION 2 OF THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT

A key provision of the Voting Rights Act that that protects minority voters from practices and procedures that deprive them of an effective vote because of their race, color or membership in a particular language minority group.

SECTION 5 OF THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT

A key provision of the Voting Rights Act that prohibits jurisdictions covered by Section 5 from adopting voting changes, including redistricting plans, that worsen the position of minority voters or changes adopted with a discriminatory purpose.

In Florida, Section 5 (preclearance) affects five counties—Collier, Hardee, Hendry, Hillsborough and Monroe. See preclearance.



ONE-PERSON, ONE-VOTE

A constitutional obligation that that requires each district to be substantially equal in total population.

Regarding the Fourteenth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, the United States Supreme Court concluded that ...*“the basic principle of representative government remains, and must remain unchanged – the weight of a citizen’s vote cannot be made to depend on where he lives.”*



Analyzing the Effects of Redistricting on Race & Ethnicity

Majority Minority District

A majority-minority district is one in which a racial or ethnic minority group comprises a majority (50% plus 1 or more) of the voting-age population of the district. See VAP (P.3).

Minority Crossover District

A crossover district is one in which minorities do not form a numerical majority but still reliably control the outcome of the election with some non-minority voters crossing over to vote with the minority group.

Minority Coalition District

A minority-coalition district is a type of majority-minority district in which two or more minority groups combine to form a majority in a district.

Minority Influence District

An influence district is one that includes a large number of minority voters but fewer than would allow the minority voters to control the election results when voting as a bloc.

PROHIBITED BY THE VOTING RIGHTS ACT

Minority Vote Dilution

Minority vote dilution occurs when minority voters are deprived of an equal opportunity to elect a candidate of choice. It is prohibited under the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Retrogression

A voting or redistricting change to a Section 5 covered jurisdiction that puts minorities in a worse position under the new scheme than under the existing law or districts.



DID YOU KNOW...

...You will be able to use the Region Label and Region Fill menus in [MyDistrictBuilder](#) to analyze redistricting plans by nearly 12,000 demographic data points, including race, ethnicity, education, income, age, and many more.

For the latest news on MyDistrictBuilder, visit floridaredistricting.org.

